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# Debt ceiling talks to resume Monday as Biden, McCarthy prepare to meet

By STEPHEN GROVES, ZEKE MILLER and, JOSH BOAK  
Associated Press  
WASHINGTON (AP) — Debt ceiling talks were set to resume Sunday evening as Washington races to strike a budget compromise along with a deal to raise the nation's borrowing limit and avert an economy-wrecking federal default. President Joe Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy spoke by phone Sunday while the president was returning home on Air Force One after the Group of Seven summit in Japan. Upbeat, McCarthy, R-Calif., told reporters at the Capitol that the call was "productive" and that the on-again, off-again negotiations between his staff and White House representatives are focused on spending cuts. He's to meet Biden on Monday at the White House.



Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., walks in the Capitol Rotunda on Capitol Hill in Washington, Sunday, May 21, 2023. Associated Press

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Associated Press

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# Uvalde families dig in for new test of gun industry protections

By PAUL J. WEBER and JAKE BLEIBERG

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — After Mayah Zamora was shot and wounded at Robb Elementary School, her family did what many mass shooting survivors do: They sued. They sued the store off Main Street in Uvalde, Texas, that sold the teenage gunman his AR-style rifle. They sued the gun maker. And they sued police who waited 77 minutes outside Mayah's fourth-grade classroom before stopping the shooting that killed 19 children and two teachers.

"Mainly what we are looking for is some sort of justice," said Christina Zamora, Mayah's mother.

As the grim frequency of gun violence continues,

both the U.S. government and gun manufacturers have reached large settlements in recent years following some of the nation's worst mass shootings. In April, the Justice Department announced a \$144 million settlement with relatives and families of a 2017 Texas church attack, which was carried out by a former U.S. airman with a criminal history.

The lawsuits, relatives and victims of mass shootings say, are an effort to get accountability and prevent more attacks — by forcing reforms, hurting the gun industry's bottom line and strengthening background checks after lapses failed to stop gunmen from buying weapons.

But despite two high-profile



**Abel Lopez, right, father of Xavier Lopez who was killed in the shootings in Uvalde, Texas, holds a banner honoring the victims after a Texas House committee voted to take up a bill to limit the age for purchasing AR-15 style weapons in the full House in Austin, Texas, Monday, May 8, 2023.**

settlements in the last year involving gun manufacturers, and Democrat-led

states rolling back some industry protections, not only do high hurdles remain for lawsuits to succeed, but in some places the hurdles are growing taller.

On May 11, Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee signed a new law that further shields gun manufacturers from lawsuits, weeks after a shooter at a Nashville school killed six people.

It comes as attorneys say the narrow path for victims to bring lawsuits has begun to widen, including for families in Uvalde, who on Wednesday will mark the one year since the most deadly school shooting in Texas history.

"I think there are more opportunities for accountability than maybe there were five to 10 years ago," said Eric Tirschwell, executive director for Everytown for Gun Safety, which for years has brought lawsuits against the gun industry and is also involved in the Uvalde case.

The track record for lawsuits following mass shootings is mixed. The gun industry remains largely protected from liability under a federal law, known as the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, though it does not completely exempt or immunize gun manufacturers from lawsuits.

Over the last decade, courts have tossed numerous lawsuits, many of which did not target the gun industry but instead brought

negligence claims against the government or the places where the attacks took place. In 2020, the casino company MGM Resorts International and its insurers agreed to an \$800 million settlement over a shooting on the Las Vegas Strip that killed 58 people and injured hundreds more.

Last year, the maker of the rifle used in the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary shooting settled with families for \$73 million over a lawsuit that accused Remington of targeting younger, at-risk males in marketing. In Tennessee, the GOP sponsor of the state's new law waved to what happened in Connecticut in defending the need to further shield the industry: "Few companies can survive a \$73 million settlement," state Rep. Monty Fritts said in February.

In Uvalde, victims have also accused Daniel Defense, the maker of the weapon used in the attack, of dangerous marketing. The company has denied that in court, and gun industry groups have broadly rejected the argument since the Sandy Hook settlement. "The commercial speech is still protected speech," said Mark Oliva, managing director for public affairs at the National Shooting Sports Foundation.

The lawsuits in Uvalde are still in the early stages and not all families sued. For the Zamoras, they decided to join only after Mayah was released from the hospital, which was not until more than two months after the shooting and dozens of surgeries. Next year, her parents say, they hope she can return to school in person.

After the Uvalde shooting, Sandy and Lonnie Phillips drove to the town and shared with families their own experiences of suing the gun industry: a decision that ended with them declaring bankruptcy after losing and a court ordering them to pay more than \$200,000 to the defendants' attorneys. □

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# Debt ceiling talks to resume Monday as Biden, McCarthy prepare to meet

Continued from Front

Negotiators for the Democratic president and Republican speaker appear to be narrowing on a budget cap for the 2024 budget year that would be key to resolving the standoff. They face a deadline, as soon as June 1, when the government could run out of cash to pay its bills. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said Sunday that June 1 is a "hard deadline."

McCarthy said after his call with Biden that "I think we can solve some of these problems if he understands what we're looking at." The speaker added, "But I've been very clear to him from the very beginning. We have to spend less money than we spent last year."

McCarthy emerged from that conversation sounding optimistic and was careful not to criticize Biden's trip, as he had before. He did caution, "There's no agreement on anything."

"We're looking at, how do we have a victory for this country?" McCarthy said. "How do we solve problems? He said he did not think the final legislation would remake the federal budget and the country's debt, but at least 'put us on a path to change the behavior of this runaway spending.'"

The White House confirmed the Monday meeting and late Sunday talks but did not elaborate on the leaders' call.

Earlier, Biden used his concluding news conference in Hiroshima, Japan, to warn House Republicans that they must move off their "extreme positions" over raising the debt limit and that there would be no agreement to avoid a catastrophic default only on their terms.

Biden said "it's time for Republicans to accept that there is no deal to be made solely, solely, on their partisan terms." He said he had done his part in attempting to raise the borrowing limit so the government can keep paying its bills, by



President Joe Biden gestures during a news conference in Hiroshima, Japan, Sunday, May 21, 2023, following the G7 Summit.

agreeing to significant cuts in spending. "Now it's time for the other side to move from their extreme position."

Biden had been scheduled to travel from Hiroshima to Papua New Guinea and Australia, but cut short his trip in light of the strained negotiations with Capitol Hill.

Even with a new wave of tax revenue expected soon, perhaps giving both sides more time to negotiate, Yellen said on NBC's "Meet the Press" that "the odds of reaching June 15, while being able to pay all of our bills, is quite low."

GOP lawmakers are holding tight to demands for sharp spending cuts with caps on future spending, rejecting the alternatives proposed by the White House for reducing deficits in part with revenue from taxes.

Republicans want to roll back next year's spending to 2022 levels, but the White House has proposed keeping 2024 the same as it is now, in the 2023 budget year.

A compromise on those topline spending levels would enable McCarthy to deliver for conservatives, while not being so severe that it would chase off the

Democratic votes that would be needed in the divided Congress to pass any bill.

Top Republican negotiator Rep. Garret Graves of Louisiana, speaking alongside McCarthy at the Capitol, said the numbers "are the foundation" of any agreement.

Republicans also want work requirements on the Medicaid health care program, though the Biden administration has countered that millions of people could lose coverage. The GOP additionally introduced new cuts to food aid by restricting states' ability to waive work requirements in places with high joblessness. That idea, when floated under President Donald Trump, was estimated to cause 700,000 people to lose their food benefits.

GOP lawmakers are also seeking cuts in IRS money and, by sparing Defense and Veterans accounts from reductions, would shift the bulk of spending reductions to other federal programs.

The White House has countered by keeping defense and nondefense spending flat next year, which would save \$90 billion in the 2024 budget year and \$1 trillion over 10 years.

All sides have been eyeing the potential for the package to include a framework that would speed energy project developments.

And despite a push by Republicans for the White House to accept parts of their proposed immigration overhaul, McCarthy indicated the focus was on the House's previously approved debt and budget package.

"I think that we can reach an agreement," Biden said, though he added this about Republicans: "I can't guarantee that they wouldn't force a default by doing something outrageous."

Republicans had also rejected various White House revenue proposals. Among the proposals the GOP objects to are policies that would enable Medicare to pay less for prescription drugs. Republicans also

have refused to roll back Trump-era tax breaks on corporations and wealthy households as Biden's own budget has proposed.

Biden, nonetheless, insisted that "revenue is not off the table."

For months, Biden had refused to engage in talks over the debt limit, contending that Republicans in Congress were trying to use the borrowing limit vote as leverage to extract administration concessions on other policy priorities.

But with the June 1 potential deadline looming and Republicans putting their own legislation on the table, the White House launched talks on a budget deal that could accompany an increase in the debt limit.

Biden's decision to set up a call with McCarthy came after another start-stop day with no outward signs of progress.

The president tried to assure leaders attending the meeting of the world's most powerful democracies that the United States would not default. U.S. officials said leaders were concerned, but largely confident that Biden and American lawmakers would resolve the crisis.

The president, though, said he was ruling out the possibility of taking action on his own to avoid a default. Any such steps, including suggestions to invoke the 14th Amendment as a solution, would become tied up in the courts.

"That's a question that I think is unresolved," Biden said, adding he hopes to try to get the judiciary to weigh in on the notion for the future. □

Associated Press




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## Using 'he/him,' 'she/her' in emails got 2 dorm directors fired

By **BOBBY CAINA CALVAN**  
Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Shua Wilmot and Raegan Zelaya, two former dorm directors at a small Christian university in western New York, acknowledge their names are unconventional, which explains why they attached gender identities to their work email signatures.

Wilmot uses "he/him." Zelaya goes by "she/her."

Their former employer, Houghton University, wanted them to drop the identifiers in line with a new policy for email formats implemented in September. Both refused and were fired.

"My name is Shua. It's an unusual name. And it ends with a vowel, 'a,' that is traditionally feminine in many languages," Wilmot said in a nearly one-hour video he and Zelaya posted on YouTube shortly after they were let go last month. "If you get an email from me and you don't know who I am, you might not know how to gender me."

Ongoing culture wars in the U.S. over sexual preferences, gender IDs and transgender rights have engulfed politics, school campuses and many other facets of public and private life. At least 17 Republican-led states have severely restricted gender affirming care. Debates continue



**This screenshot of a YouTube interview on April 22, 2023, from user Malcolm Davon Smith, shows former Houghton University employees Raegan Zelaya, left, and Shua Wilmot after they were fired from the school.**

Associated Press

to rage in some communities about school curricula mentioning sexual orientation or gender identity. And pickets have sprung up outside public libraries hosting "drag story hours."

Meanwhile, controversies swirl at campuses with religious affiliations. The recent firings prompted more than 700 Houghton alumni to sign a petition in protest.

In the Northwest, 16 plaintiffs are suing Seattle Pacific University, a Christian liberal arts college, to challenge the school's employment policy barring people in same-sex relationships from full-time jobs.

In New York City, LGBTQ students are challenging Yeshiva University's decision to bar their student-run

club from campus.

Paul Southwick, director of the Religious Exemption Accountability Project, a 2-year-old advocacy group for LGBTQ students at publicly funded religious colleges and universities, said actions such as these are cause for despair.

"There's a backlash against the rise of LGBTQ rights," he said, and not just with "white evangelical Christianity in the South ... but in places like New York and Oregon that we wouldn't think would be experiencing this backlash."

Earlier this year, a federal judge in Oregon dismissed a lawsuit that LGBTQ students filed against the U.S. Department of Education claiming it didn't protect

them against discrimination at religiously affiliated universities receiving federal money.

Houghton University, an 800-student campus 60 miles (96 kilometers) south-east of Buffalo, says it offers a "Christ-centered education in the liberal arts and sciences."

In a statement emailed to The Associated Press on Saturday, the university said it could not speak publicly about personnel matters, but it "has never terminated an employment relationship based solely on the use of pronouns in staff email signatures."

The university said it had previously asked employees to remove "anything extraneous," including Bible quotes, from email signatures.

The university also shared with the AP an email outlining its new policy sent to staff. The memo cautioned employees against using politically divisive and inflammatory speech in communications bearing the Houghton name. It also directed them to use standardized signature styles and forbade the use of pronouns.

Also attached to the statement was a copy of a letter university President Wayne D. Lewis Jr. sent to students. "I would never ask you to agree with or support ev-

ery decision I make," Lewis wrote. "But I do humbly ask that you resist the temptation to reduce Houghton's decision making to the simple and convenient political narratives of our time."

Zelaya said she received an email in the fall from administrators saying the school was mandating changes in colors, fonts and other aspects of email to help the school maintain branding consistency.

She complied, she said, but retained her pronouns on her signature, calling it a "standard industry practice" to do so.

In the dismissal letters hand-delivered to Wilmot and Raegan Zelaya, copies of which they shared on social media, the university wrote that the firings were "a result of your refusal to remove pronouns in your email signatures in violation of institutional policy."

In a video posted on Facebook, Zelaya said she already has another job lined up. In their joint YouTube video, she and Wilmot urged their supporters to push for change in policies, but constructively and with civility.

"As a result of this whole controversy, as a result of having my pronouns in my email signature," Wilmot said, "it's given me the opportunity to educate people on this topic." □

## Canada wildfires prompts air quality alerts in Colorado, Montana

**DENVER (AP)** — Smoke from dozens of raging wildfires in western Canada has drifted south into the United States and prompted the states of Colorado and Montana to issue air quality alerts.

Colorado's Department of Public Health and Environment put out alerts and advisories for Saturday afternoon through Sunday afternoon for much of the eastern half of the state, including Denver. It warned that air quality may be unhealthy during that period. "People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion;

everyone else should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion," the department said.

Particle pollution led the air quality index along parts of the Front Range to reach 168 on Saturday, the department said. A reading between 151 and 200 indicates unhealthy conditions that can affect sensitive groups as well as some members of the general public.

An air quality alert was also in effect Saturday in Montana, with the greatest smoke concentrations in central and eastern parts of the state, according to the Department of Environ-



**Jetliners taxi in heavy smoke at Denver International Airport Friday, May 19, 2023, in Denver.**

Associated Press

mental Quality.

Utah's Department of Environmental Quality said Friday that it was starting to see the smoke on its monitors in northern and eastern parts of the state. It urged residents to avoid outdoor

exertion in areas with visible smoke or haze.

The smoke created widespread haze across Idaho earlier in the week, according to its Department of Environmental Quality.

The fires in Canada have

been burning mostly in the province of Alberta, where thousands of residents have evacuated and regional officials have issued state of emergency alerts. There have also been fires in British Columbia.

In Calgary and Edmonton, the two biggest cities in Alberta, the health impact was determined to be of "very high risk" on Saturday by the Canadian government's Air Quality Health Index. Sensitive groups such as children and older people were advised to avoid outdoor physical exertion and the general population was urged to limit outdoor activities. □



# Peace, food and fertilizer: African leaders' challenge heading to talks

By GERALD IMRAY  
Associated Press

A delegation of six African leaders set to hold talks with Kyiv and Moscow aim to "initiate a peace process," but also broach the thorny issue of how a heavily-sanctioned Russia can be paid for the fertilizer exports Africa desperately needs, a key mediator who helped broker the talks said in an interview with The Associated Press.

Jean-Yves Ollivier, an international negotiator who has been working for six months to put the talks together, said the African leaders would also discuss the related issue of easing the passage of more grain shipments out of Ukraine amid the war and the possibility of more prisoner swaps when they travel to both countries on what they've characterized as a peace mission.

The talks will likely be next month, Ollivier said.

He arrived in Moscow on Sunday and will also go to Kyiv for meetings with high-level officials to work out "logistics" for the upcoming talks. For one, the six African presidents would likely have to travel to Kyiv by night train from Poland amid the fighting, he said. Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy have both agreed to separately host the delegation of presidents from South Africa, Senegal, Egypt, Republic of Congo, Uganda and Zambia.

The talks also have the approval of the United States, the European Union, the United Nations, the African Union and China, Ollivier said in a video call with the AP on Friday.

Neither side in the war appears ready to stop fighting, though.

The talks were announced last week by President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa just as Russia launched an intense air attack on Kyiv. On Sunday, Russia claimed to have taken the key eastern Ukrainian city of Bakhmut after fierce



Workers load grain at a grain port in Izmail, Ukraine, on April 26, 2023.

Associated Press

fighting, a claim denied by Ukraine.

"We are not dreamers," Ollivier said on the chances the African leaders will achieve an immediate breakthrough with regard to stopping the 15-month conflict. "Unless something happens, I don't think we are going to finish our first mission with a ceasefire."

The aim was to make a start, said Ollivier, a 78-year-old Frenchman who brought opposing sides together in high-stakes negotiations in the late 1980s that helped end apartheid in South Africa.

"It starts with signs. It starts with dialogue. And this is what we are going to try to do," Ollivier said. "No guarantee that we are going to succeed but, for the time being, Russia and Ukraine have accepted ... a delegation coming specifically to their countries to talk about peace."

A key starting point for Africa is grain and fertilizers.

The war has severely restricted the export of grain from Ukraine and fertilizers from Russia, exacerbating global food insecurity and hunger. Africa has been one of the hardest-hit continents. Last week, Russia agreed to a two-month ex-

tension of a deal brokered by Turkey and the U.N. that allows Ukraine to ship grain through the Black Sea and out to the world, and the six African presidents would like to see that extended further.

But they also need to broach ways of making it easier for African nations to receive shipments and pay Russia for fertilizers, Ollivier said. Russian fertilizer is not under international sanctions but the U.S. and some Western nations have targeted Russian cargo ships for sanctions. Russia's access to the SWIFT global financial transaction system also has been restricted by the sanctions, leaving African nations struggling to order and pay for critical fertilizers.

"We will need to have a window whereby SWIFT will be authorized for this specific point," Ollivier said. "That will be on the table and we hope that in that case we will gain the support of the Russians for the grains from Ukraine, and we will gain the support of the Ukrainians to find payments and shipments possible for the Russian fertilizer." The African mission is not the only mediation effort. China offered its own peace

proposal in February and a Chinese envoy has been in discussions with Ukrainian officials. But China's plan has largely been dismissed by Ukraine's Western allies and is clouded by Beijing's political support for Moscow.

Ukraine and Russia are far apart in terms of any agreements that might form the base of a peace deal. The African delegation still had a wide cross-section of backing, Ollivier said, after China also "came to us and offered support" on the basis it would be a "parallel effort" to Beijing's plan.

"More support, more weight will be put on the negotiation (with Moscow and Kyiv)," said Ollivier, the founding chairman of the London-based Brazzaville Foundation, an organization that deals with conflict resolution. "If one party says no, they will consider to who they are saying no. Are they saying no only to Jean-Yves Ollivier? To the Brazzaville Foundation? To the six (African) heads of state?"

"Or are they saying no to the United Nations, or to the Chinese, or to the Americans. To the British? To the European Union?" □

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# Mexico prosecutors withdraw case against woman sentenced to prison for killing man raping her

By **MEGAN JANETSKY**

**Associated Press**

**MEXICO CITY (AP)** —

Mexican prosecutors announced Saturday night that they are withdrawing a case against a woman who was sentenced to six years in prison for killing a man as he raped and attacked her.

In a ruling last week that touched off a public outcry, a court in Mexico State said that while it agreed 23-year-old Roxana Ruiz was raped in 2021, it found her guilty of homicide with "excessive use of legitimate defense." It also ordered Ruiz to pay more than \$16,000 in reparations to the family of her attacker.

Feminist groups, which have supported Ruiz's defense, angrily protested, saying the ruling was criminalizing survivors of sexual violence while protecting perpetrators in a country with high levels of gender-based violence and femicides. Protesters in Mexico City carried signs reading "Defending my life isn't a crime."

Ruiz, an Indigenous woman and single mother, told reporters after the court's ruling that she had received death threats because of the case and that she worried for her family's safety,



**Roxana Ruiz, behind the gate, speaks from inside the court complex on the day of her court hearing where she is charged with killing her attacker in Chimalhuacan, State of Mexico, Mexico, April 18, 2022.**

**Associated Press**

particularly the life of her 4-year-old son.

"This isn't justice," she said. "Remember I am the one who was sexually assaulted by that man, and after he died because I defended myself ... because I didn't want to die by his hands." Responding to the outrage, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador had said during a morning press briefing that he would seek to pardon Ruiz. But her lawyers said accepting a pardon would be admitting Ruiz committed a crime and that she is completely innocent.

In a press release Saturday night, the state Prosecutor's Office said it had examined the case — taking into consideration that Ruiz is part of a vulnerable group — and found she was "exempt from guilt." It added that the Prosecutor's Office believes she acted in self defense.

The announcement was celebrated by Ruiz's defense lawyer, Ángel Carrera, though he noted that he had not been formally notified of the charges being dropped.

"It means that they're recognizing her innocence,"

Carrera told The Associated Press. "It's a recognition that she simply defended herself."

In May 2021, Ruiz was working selling french fries in Nezahualcoyotl, one of the 11 municipalities in Mexico State, a state that borders Mexico City on three sides and continues to have posted alerts warning women about femicides and the forced disappearances of women.

The defense said Ruiz had a drink with a friend and a man she knew around the neighborhood. The man offered to walk her home, later asking to stay the night because it was late and he was far from home. While she slept on a separate bed, the man attacked and raped her.

Ruiz fought back and he threatened to kill her, then in the struggle, Ruiz managed to kill the man in self defense, Carrera said.

The court said the man was hit in the head and knocked unconscious, saying that was enough for Ruiz to defend herself. Carrera said that claim was "totally false," saying it had not been determined that the attacked was rendered unconscious.

Carrera said that in a panic, Ruiz put the man's body in a bag and dragged it out

to the street, where passing police arrested her.

Despite Ruiz telling police she had been raped, a forensic exam was never done, a crucial step in prosecuting sexual violence cases, Carrera said. Instead, an officer responded that she probably wanted to have sex with the man at first and then changed her mind, the lawyer said.

Nearly half of Mexican women have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime, government data say.

In 2022, the Mexican government registered a total of 3,754 women — an average of 10 a day — who were slain, a significant jump from the year before. Only a third were investigated as femicides.

Carrera said he hopes the announcement of the case being dropped sets a precedent for other gender-based violence cases to be more thoroughly investigated and treated with deeper sensitivity.

The Associated Press does not normally identify sexual assault victims, but Ruiz has given her permission to be identified and participates in public demonstrations led by activists who support her. □

## Animal rights activists protest octopus farm plans in Spain

**MADRID (AP)** — Animal rights activists gathered Sunday in Madrid to protest plans for the construction of an octopus farm in Spain, saying there are no respective laws in the country and the European Union to guarantee the welfare of the animals in captivity. The proposed farm, which aims to breed octopuses on a large scale in captivity, is scheduled to be built next year in the Canary Islands, a Spanish archipelago located in the Atlantic Ocean.

A few dozen people showed up to express their concerns regarding a project that plans to confine 3

million octopuses in pools, despite these creatures being solitary predators in their natural habitat.

"It is similar to imprisoning tigers together. They will prey on one another and will also attempt to escape due to their high intelligence and adeptness," said Jaime Posada, a spokesperson for the protest called by various animal welfare organizations.

Octopuses grown in captivity will behave differently from those in the wild, said Nova Pescanova, the seafood company promoting this farm. Since 2018, the company has run a pilot project in a research facil-

ity in northern Spain, where they have succeeded in breeding five captivity-born generations of the cephalopod.

"It is not possible to grow any (animal) species in the European Union without respecting their welfare conditions. It is the standard, and our group does nothing but comply with guidelines and legislations," said Roberto Romero, the multinational's aquaculture director.

Since the demand for octopus consumption has been on the rise, farming octopuses is being regarded as a first step towards ensuring sustainable food produc-



tion.

Octopus is a staple in the Mediterranean diet, particularly popular in Spain and Italy, although both of them import most of the octopus they consume. Recently, the global demand for this delicacy has ex-

panded, with countries like the United States witnessing a 23% increase in imports and China experiencing a 73% surge between 2016 and 2018, according to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. □





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## The prime minister gives recognition to Aruban Models who recently competed in international competition

**(Oranjestad)—Tuesday afternoon, through an invitation of Prime Minister Evelyn Wever-Croes, the five models who have recently modeled and represented Aruba abroad, visited the prime minister for an exciting meeting. The prime minister took this opportunity to chat with each of the models on their experiences in the modeling world and their representation abroad.**

Also present was Tanique Chan, who in 2022, represented Aruba in the Dominican Republic, winning the title of Miss Tropical. From here, Tanique went on to represent Aruba again in New York Fashion Week, Los Angeles Fashion Week, and will be participating in the upcoming London Fashion Week this September. Tanique Chan is the first disabled model from Aruba that have walked the runways of New York and Los Angeles Fashion Week.

The models who have recently participating in the Orland Fashion Kids competition were also present. These participants strutted the runway wearing

designs by both local and international designers. It was at this modeling competition that Aruba showed how this small island consists of talented models with great potential to break in the international industry. Among the participants were Ciara Winterdaal, who won the title of Baby Top Model; Caithlyne Kock, who won the title of Preeteen Top Model; Javannah Besselink, who placed second in the Teen Top Model category and Stacey de Veer, who won the title of Super Top Model.

The prime minister has expressed her profound pride in each of the participating for representing their island country, putting Aruba in the spotlight once again. The prime minister also thanked the director of The Chaz Model and Talent School, Mrs. Chastity Kock-Hodge, for her dedication, patience and love for guiding these children in achieving their dreams to become international models.

Chastity or Chas, as everyone calls her, is not a stranger in the world of



modeling. Seeing as modeling was also her passion, she decided from a relatively young age to start giving modeling lessons to young children and teens. After seeing the interest coming from the parents of these children, Chastity decided to branch out a little, introducing dance lesson, followed by offering preparatory lessons for Carnaval Queen. During many years, Chastity work with a passion, and has dedicated herself to the community by presenting spectacular shows. Considering her love for children and the general need to support and guide disabled children, she opened her doors to also include disabled children in her dance and modeling lessons.

Nowadays, The Chaz Modeling & Talent School is a renowned talent school on the island, that not only offers local showcases, but also sends its students to

different competition and modeling gigs abroad, which in recent years, have brought back many winning titles. This year, The Chaz Modeling & Talent School is celebrating its 25th anniversary, and will be celebrating this with a magical show in the month of November of this year.

The models who recently participated in the Orland Fashion Kids did a wonderful job, almost taking home every winning title in the competition. "I'm ex-

tremely proud of everyone here. A huge congratulations goes to each of you who have represented our tiny island with pride, and I hope to see more from you all in the future. A big thank you to Mrs. Chastity as well for her hard work, dedication and guidance of these children in the world of modeling, singing and dance. I'm very proud of you and your entire team who has made all this possible. Thank you," the prime minister said to her visitors.




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## Over a decade in business, Aruba Living Today: Offering the so much needed human touch



**NOORD —** We are in 2023. It was a wild ride with Covid-19 and we all are aiming for a change of routine. We simply want to “live” life again. “It is time for living your dream,” as the quote says at Aruba Living Today’s office. “We are fifteen plus years in business, and I am proud to say that all our clients stuck with us. We are no part of a big company, we keep it small, personal, and real. Because you are not a number, no sales target either and certainly your name is not commission. Our responsibility is to make your dream come true,” says owner Randolph Arends.

### From human to human

If you have decided to buy a house or rent one for vacation in Aruba and you are looking for that match, the question now is how to click with a person that offers a personal touch? One who pays genuine attention and has sincere interest in what you want?

This different approach to real estate is what sets Aruba Living Today apart, and the reason Randolph calls himself a property mediator instead of a real estate broker. “The personal touch is essential to me. I am stepping aside of the image that real estate brokers are only in for the commission. This image does not fit me at all, I am in for my passion, and I can only do this from the heart.”

### One stop shopping point

Services offered by Aruba Living Today are House and Land Sales, Rentals, Investments, Property Management, Vacation Rental, Mortgages, Insurances, Maintenance, Assist in Arrangements for Notary and Utilities, Guiding Bureaucracy Process and Assisting in Import of Furniture. Randolph and his business partner Eladio Max Maduro. Born in Aruba, he was raised in the Netherlands. Max was Corporal mandatory in the Dutch Army/Genie der Landmacht. He also studied financial administration in the Netherlands, and has a degree in Dutch insurance law. Max has 40 years work experience in all kind of insurance, specialized liability and pension law. In the past, he worked for local and international insurance brokers companies.

As per March 1st 2023, he is working as a commercial partner at Aruba Living Today.

### You are welcome to meet in person

Aruba Living Today houses in an authentic Aruban house, welcoming you in a warm ambiance that emphasizes the philosophy of connecting. Candles, Buddha ornaments and a homey setting form the décor for you to sit and talk about your dream house or investment. “My goal was to do real estate in a different way when I established this company June 1st 2009. Not from the perspective of only selling, but to look for the perfect match between dream house and client. My philosophy is: it will only work when all involved are happy and connected by that personal touch.”



Aruba Living Today caters for both local and foreign market divided into 40 % local buyers and 60 % foreign buyers. “Our customers come from Holland, Belgium, Norway, Germany, UK, Russia, Latin America, United States and Canada. We are widely covered and thus provable good with different cultures, also we speak four languages.” Besides that, Aruba Living Today is open to every budget, they have listings for all category buyers.

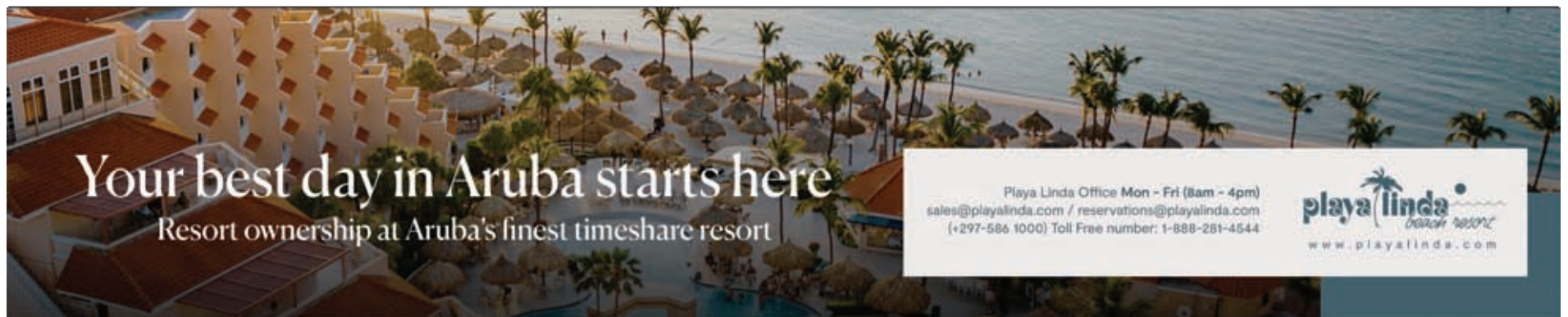
As a member of the Aruban Real Estate Association, they are listed also on the website [www.arubalisting.com](http://www.arubalisting.com) within a group of 20 of the most advanced realtors on the island.

Aruba Living Today is featured on House Hunters, social media, Aruba Living Today and of course in Aruba Today’s newspaper. □

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## Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa hosts Club Kibrahacha for Mother's & Father's Day Event

**Eagle Beach** - On May 5th, 2023, Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa hosted Club Kibrahacha for a Mother's & Father's Day Event. Beneath the open-aided Pavilion, 200 members enjoyed a tasty lunch prepared by Manchebo's Executive Chef Sandro Herold.

With live music and good company, all 200 members were served a delicious meal by Manchebo personnel for a delightful afternoon. Amongst invitees were the director of Club Kibrahacha Jeffrey Matos and the Minister of Transport, Integrity, Nature, and Elderly Care Mr. Ursell Arends along with Manchebo's General Manager Mr. Edgar Roelofs.

Club Kibrahacha was founded in 1983 as an initiative of the Aruba Rotary Club. The objective of the foundation is to establish and maintain an activity center for our senior citizens. Club Kibrahacha 60+ promotes an independent way of living for the elderly in the modern society based upon their capability and opportunity.

Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa has actively participated for years with voluntary initiatives and contributions throughout the island. Manchebo's Team is firmly committed to 'giving a helping hand' and assisting wherever needed.





## Aruba's underwater wonderland

**ORANJESTAD** - Exploring the underwater wonders is something you should definitely do during your stay in Aruba. The underwater world has everything to offer that makes a snorkel trip so exceptional; an impressive, colorful sea life with exotic fishes, turtles and beautiful coral reef. The historic shipwrecks, located on the Aruban seabed are also worth a visit. Aruba is known for its white beaches and blue oceans, which means there are many fascinating under water spots, where you can take your snorkeling gear and we selected the top spots for you.

### Tres Trapi

Tres Trapi means tree steps in Papiamentu, Papiamen-



to is together with Dutch the official language spoken on Aruba. The beach is called Tres Trapi because it is accessible by the tree steps carved into the rocks. Tres Trapi is a small rocky beach, located on the north-western side of the island, approximately 5 to 10 minute drive from Palm

Beach. From the unique steps you can easily walk over the beach into the clear and turquoise blue ocean. While snorkeling you will encounter all kind of tropical fishes and sea stars. The kind of starfish you will find in the Aruban waters is the red cushion sea star. This is a starfish that is commonly found in the shallow waters of the Caribbean sea and if you are lucky during your snorkeling visit to Tres Trapi, you may come across one of the green sea turtles. Respect the animal, keep your distance and enjoy the view. Also remember; it is a once in a life time experience.

### Antilla shipwreck

Antilla is a 400-foot-long

long ship, built in 1939 in Hamburg, Germany. Antilla came to Aruba, because it had to find a neutral port. When Germany invaded the Netherlands on May 10, 1940, the crew decided to let their own ship sink, to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Dutch Navy. Antilla lies on its port-side in Malmok bay, and the sunken world war two ship is now one of Aruba's most popular snorkeling and dive spots. However, the ship wreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the ship wreck alone is already impressive enough.

Baby beach is an excellent beach for snorkeling, especially if you want to go with small children, because the water remains shallow and there are still many underwater wonders to see. In the ocean there is an area marked until where it is recommended to snorkel and on the beach you will find different facilities. It is a perfect beach to spend your day snorkeling and relaxing.

### Mangel Halto

Mangel Halto beach is located in Savaneta, on the southern-west part of the island. The beach is different from the other beaches in Aruba; it is beach full of mangroves. You reach the beach by a bridge through



### Baby Beach

Baby beach; a white beach, with a crystal blue ocean. The beach is located on the southern part of the island. On the way to the famous beach, you will drive through the old capital of Aruba, San Nicolas. The old Aruban culture can be still felt and experienced here, so do not hesitate to get out of your car and walk around for a while. Baby beach is a child friendly beach, since it is shallow and the water has a pleasant temperature. The name therefore fits well with the beach.

the mangroves and then you will have several entrances to the sea. There are diverse spots where you can enjoy a perfect beach day, wooden stairs made to enter the water and a dock to sit on and enjoy the view. Mangel Halto is also worth a visit for the snorkeling experience. Inside the bay, the water is clear and you find many colorful fish. Outside the bay is a bit more challenging for beginners because of the wind and the waves, but the coral is alive and it is just like snorkel heaven. □






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## Artist Erika Moran:

# “My message is to carry the greatness that we all have inside, and that greatness implies art”

Oranjestad - Erika Moran, an artist of plastic art that has gone through many phases in her life, sat down in an interview and told the story of life taught her what she had inside of her and what this can bring to others.



During the interview, Moran went back in time and talked about how she came to Aruba from Barranquilla, Colombia 14 years ago following love, and that led to her exploring the culture of Aruba. She would read the national anthem, learn the language and meet locals, all which in her thoughts were for a reason. “I connected with the tranquility of the island, with harmony, the beach for me is my therapy and through an immense search, I discovered that I had a lot of time without painting and I fell into a great sadness,” said Moran.

Depression is a word that she felt and lived personally. She feels the need to speak about this topic because she knows that “there are a lot of people out there at this moment, in all parts of the world, that fall into a great sadness. I discovered that this is a way that my soul would speak to me and tell me to bring out everything that I really am.”

In this search, everyone looks for what they can give to others and what the things we receive can give us, “but that is not what truly fills you,” Erika expressed. Moran discovered that she was looking on the outside for something that was already within her. “What I found was that I am an artist and through that I started to explore the nature of Aruba. I connected with its colors and through my artwork I wanted to transmit this to others.”

Through colors and the psychology of each one of them, she started to use her brushes to illustrate the fauna, flora and beaches to transmit an emotional state for people to be able to connect through her artwork with their emotional state. “Psychology through color can transmit calm, stress or a state of internal searching that represents the road of your sub consciousness and the road can be represented through the colors purple, blue, red, until you reach the color yellow that represents illumination. That is the message, to carry the greatness that everyone has inside. And that greatness implies art.”



Moran expressed that in her opinion, everyone has art and everyone is an artist. The only way each person can channel that is through art and that state of creativity includes different emotions like happiness, sadness, euphoria, that in turn the artist can relate to as well

that although the road is hard, we have to connect with each other so we can be a lighthouse for each other. Imagine if we all could realize this? We can achieve a different world. We have to help each other and that way we can create a marvelous chain that will take



as every other person that has these emotions in them. “That was my journey to accept myself after many tries to be someone else, another version of myself. Now I am an artist and I teach others that we all have this capacity in us.”

The essence of coming to his world is to learn, and just as Moran emphasizes, teaching others how to learn is part of it. “We need to teach

time, but is worth it all.”

She also informed that she promotes events for our visitors to also learn art, tell their history of Aruba, talk about the touristic places and paints them as well. With this, people can connect with culture, art and gets a different experience of entertainment.



# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 37 Singer
  - 1 Gift-wrapping need
  - 5 Lesser-played half of a 45
  - 10 Beige
  - 11 Indivisible numbers
  - 13 Fleet member
  - 14 Tuba sound
  - 15 Hardy hen
  - 17 Poem of praise
  - 18 Classifies
  - 19 Cath. or Prot.
  - 20 Beam of light
  - 21 Lab bottle
  - 22 Delicate
  - 25 Deceitful people
  - 26 Maggie and Bart's sister
  - 27 Singer
  - 28 Play division
  - 29 Furniture wheels
  - 33 Question of identity
  - 34 Coin-op eatery
  - 35 Bit of gossip
- DOWN**
- 38 Least moist
  - 39 "What's — for me?"
  - 40 Copenhagen natives
  - 41 Totals
  - 1 Inventor
  - 2 Massage targets
  - 3 Puritanical ones
  - 4 Bliss
  - 5 Stylish
  - 6 Some golf clubs
  - 7 Poorly lit
  - 8 Stores
  - 9 "Come on, help me out"
  - 12 Beach-combing finds
  - 16 Vaccine type
  - 21 Long-reigning queen
  - 22 Imperfect
  - 23 Explorer
  - Byrd
  - 24 Oregon city
  - 25 Shopping aid
  - 27 Bank fixtures
  - 29 Lead to
  - 30 Correct, as text
  - 31 Zealous
  - 32 ERA
  - and RBI
  - 36 Marsh

S	T	R	O	P	S	S	P	U	D
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A	R	T	E	R	Y	T	O	L	L
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Saturday's answer

## DOWN

- 1 Inventor
- Nikola
- 2 Massage targets
- 3 Puritanical ones
- 4 Bliss
- 5 Stylish
- 6 Some golf clubs
- 7 Poorly lit
- 8 Stores
- 9 "Come on, help me out"
- 12 Beach-combing finds
- 16 Vaccine type
- 21 Long-reigning queen
- 22 Imperfect
- 23 Explorer
- Byrd
- 24 Oregon city
- 25 Shopping aid
- 27 Bank fixtures
- 29 Lead to
- 30 Correct, as text
- 31 Zealous
- 32 ERA
- and RBI
- 36 Marsh

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35			36				37		
38							39		
	40						41		

5-22

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-22

CRYPTOQUOTE

Y N N Q J U A P Z L K Z E A  
F N G G Z F A N K . E G Q V E R I P U  
E K Z A P Z F Z I Z G A . — W P J V  
K N U Z G A P E V

Saturday's Cryptoquote: YOU THINK YOUR PAIN AND YOUR HEARTBREAK ARE UNPRECEDENTED IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD. BUT THEN YOU READ. — JAMES BALDWIN

## 5 tips to tackle a home remodel in an uncertain economy

By ANNIE MILLERBERND of NerdWallet

Spring is kickoff season for many kitchen remodels, bathroom updates and deck repairs, but recent economic turmoil may have homeowners questioning their home improvement plans.

Spending on home renovations is expected to slow this year because of factors such as declining home sales and values, rising interest rates, continuing inflation and rumblings of a coming recession, says Abbe Will, senior research associate with Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies.

As economic growth slows, planning and prioritizing will be key to remodeling confidently. Here are five tips to help you remodel in an uncertain economy.

### 1. START WITH AN EMERGENCY FUND

Even when the economy is doing well, it's ideal to have an emergency fund before starting a remodel, says Eric Maldonado, a certified financial planner based in San Luis Obispo, California. "What you're trying to avoid is starting with nothing saved, taking out debt to afford these things and not really providing yourself with a smart foundation to start from," he says.

A six-month fund is a good goal, he says, especially if you're concerned about losing your job.

### 2. NARROW YOUR FINANCIAL GOALS

After your emergency fund is set, put remodeling on a short list of your financial priorities for the year and distribute your budget accordingly, Maldonado says.

For example, if your main goals are to pay off debt, contribute to your kids' college funds and begin home improvement projects, determine how much each goal costs and how much you can afford to spend on them every month, he says. "It's kind of like putting the big rocks into the jar first," he says.

This may mean slowing progress toward other financial goals, like early retirement or purchasing a new car.

### 3. PRIORITIZE REPAIRS AND SMALL UPDATES

If high gas and grocery bills have left you with less to spend on home improvements this year, prioritize projects that have the potential to affect your finances the most, says Katherine Fox, a certified financial planner



A beam is measured and marked at a housing site in Madison County, Miss., Tuesday, March 16, 2021.

Associated Press

based in Portland, Oregon.

Fox recommends starting with fixes that would be costlier to delay, such as a leaking pipe. Then, consider updates that will save you money in the future, like new windows or insulation that may lower your utility bill.

Look for opportunities to mix "nice-to-haves" with "must-haves," she says.

"Maybe you have something behind a wall that needs to be fixed, so you have to open up a wall, and then you have to repaint," she says. "Maybe you take this opportunity to fix a need and get a want at the same time."

### 4. COMPARE FINANCING OPTIONS

The Federal Reserve's persistent interest rate hikes over the past year have led to raised rates on most financing options, so you'll likely pay more interest on a new home improvement loan than you would have before. Maldonado says home equity loans and lines of credit are typically the lowest-rate options, but he recommends comparing financing options to find the best rate and terms.

Most home equity and personal loans come in a lump sum and have fixed interest rates, so your monthly payment remains the same for the full term.

A home equity line of credit, or HELOC, provides more flexibility for large projects because you can draw on it as needed for up to about

10 years. However, HELOCs typically have variable rates, which means monthly payments can fluctuate.

### 5. CONSIDER DELAYING TO SAVE MONEY

While prioritizing projects, decide whether you can delay any for a year or more. As fickle as the economy has been, there are signs that those who wait could pay less.

The pandemic-induced remodeling frenzy triggered a sharp increase in labor and materials costs that homeowners felt last year, according to a March 2023 report from Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies. Cement, brick and plywood prices rose 20% to 25% between March 2020 and December 2022, the report found. Insulation material costs rose 34%. This year, materials may get cheaper, the report said. Likewise, home improvement spending is expected to decline in early 2024 for the first time in more than a decade, according to the center's Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity, which measures and projects remodeling spending.

If you can tolerate the guest bathroom as it is or stomach that non-load-bearing wall for another year or two, you could get the work done at a discount, Fox says.

Just be sure you're in a secure financial position and feel good about your employment prospects if you bet on a recession, she says. □

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24/7



# NASA picks Bezos' Blue Origin to build lunar landers for moonwalkers



This image provided by Blue Origin shows the Blue Moon lander.

**By MARCIA DUNN**  
**AP Aerospace Writer**  
**CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.**  
**(AP)** — Jeff Bezos' rocket company has won a NASA contract to land astronauts on the moon, two years after it lost out to SpaceX. Blue Origin received a \$3.4 billion contract Friday to lead a team to develop a lunar lander named Blue Moon. It will be used to transport astronauts to the lunar surface as early as 2029, following a pair of crew landings by Elon Musk's SpaceX. NASA will get astronauts to lunar orbit using its own rockets and capsules, but wants private companies to take over from there. NASA Administrator Bill Nelson said the agency wants different landing options as it seeks a return to the moon more than a half-century after the end of the Apollo moonshots. Blue Origin is kicking in billions of dollars, on top of the NASA contract, to help establish a permanent presence on the moon. "We have a lot to do before we successfully land and return astronauts," said John Couluris, a Blue Origin vice president. Two years ago, Blue Origin sued after NASA awarded SpaceX the contract for the first lunar landing. A federal judge upheld the space agency's decision.

NASA's Artemis program, which follows the 1960s and 1970s Apollo moonshots, kicked off with a successful test flight late last year. Launched atop NASA's new moon rocket, an empty Orion capsule went into lunar orbit before returning home. The next Artemis flight will come late next year when one Canadian and three U.S. astronauts fly to the moon and back, but not land. Two Americans would descend to the lunar surface aboard a SpaceX Starship on the mission after that, no earlier than late 2025. Like SpaceX, Blue Origin plans to practice landing on the moon without a crew, before putting astronauts on board. While the shiny, stainless steel Starship has a science fiction look, Blue Moon resembles more of a traditional capsule perched atop a tall compartment with legs. The latter will stand 52 feet (16 meters) on the moon. Both companies' landers are meant to be reusable. Blue Origin will use its still-in-development New Glenn rocket to launch its lunar missions from Cape Canaveral. Starship, the world's largest rocket, made its debut last month from South Texas; the test flight ended in an explosive fireball a few minutes into flight. Blue Origin's team includes five partners: Lockheed

Martin, Boeing, Draper, Astrobotic Technology and Honeybee Robotics. Only one other bid was submitted for the contract competition, according to NASA. □

Associated Press



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## Yankees sweep Reds as managers Boone, Bell ejected

**CINCINNATI (AP)** — The New York Yankees headed back home after a 6-1 trip, completing a three-game sweep with a 4-1 win over the Cincinnati Reds following a contentious series in Toronto.

"I think we learned a lot about ourselves this road trip," Harrison Bader said after his go-ahead, two-run homer sparked a comeback in Sunday's series finale against the Reds. "If we didn't already know it prior to having stuff go a little sideways, have some high energy that was kind of away from the game of baseball, we learned it now."

Gleyber Torres also homered as the Yankees extended a winning streak to four for the first time this season. The series against the Reds was relatively calm after a trip to Toronto that included allegations of sign stealing, Domingo Germán's ejection for sticky substances and testy exchanges.

Luis Severino returned from a strained lat muscle that had sidelined him since spring training and allowed one run and four hits in 4 2/3

innings with five strikeouts and one walk. He threw 54 of 75 pitches for strikes and averaged 96.7 mph with 44 fastballs.

"I was finding the zone. Changeup was really good," Severino said. "Got some swings on the breaking ball."

Yankees manager Aaron Boone was ejected in the first inning and Reds manager David Bell in the eighth.

New York (29-20), which gave slugger Aaron Judge the day off, has won six of seven and 14 of 19, improving to a season-high nine games over .500.

Cincinnati has lost six of seven, dropping into last place in the NL Central.

In a game that started at 11:37 a.m., Severino opened with a four-pitch walk to Jonathan India and Spencer Speer hit a two-out fly down the right-field line that Jake Bauers nearly caught but allowed to bounce off his glove.

The ball was ruled foul by first base umpire Nestor Ceja but the call was overturned in a video review and India was allowed to score. Boone, angry be-



**New York Yankees manager Aaron Boone, right, speaks with umpire Brian O'Nora in the first inning of a baseball game against the Cincinnati Reds in Cincinnati, Sunday, May 21, 2023.**

**Associated Press**

cause India slowed down between third and home, came out to argue and was ejected by plate umpire Emil Jimenez. Boone was ejected for the third time this season and 29th in his managerial career.

"I was just at first trying to get an explanation of why and they just say you can't argue that," Boone said. "I shouldn't have gotten kicked out there because, in the end, I think it was probably right thing."

Bell was tossed by Jimenez in the eighth for arguing

the umpire's failure to call a quick pitch on Wandy Peralta to Luke Maile. Bell's ejection was his second of the series, third this season and 23rd of his career.

"I wasn't able to get an explanation," Bell said.

Albert Abreu (2-1) followed Severino and got four straight outs. Jimmy Cordero pitched a perfect seventh and Peralta a 1-2-3 eighth.

Cincinnati loaded the bases in the ninth against Clay Holmes on two hits and walk before Will Benson

hit a game-ending comebacker. Holmes got his fifth save in seven chances, his first save since April 12.

New York's relievers pitched 14 2/3 scoreless innings in the series and leads the major leagues with a 2.87 bullpen ERA.

"We've got some guys back, but we have been beat up," Boone said after the Yankees completed a stretch of 33 games in 34 days.

Hunter Greene (0-4) remained winless in 10 starts this season and has allowed eight home runs. He gave up four runs, four hits and three walks in a season-high seven innings and matched his season high with 10 strikeouts.

Bader put the Yankees ahead with a two-run homer in the fifth with a drive over the left-field wall for his fourth homer, Torres added an opposite-field drive to right on a fastball in the sixth. Anthony Volpe added an RBI single in the seventh.

"Bader hit a changeup. Everyone knows I'm working on it but still had a lot of success with it in a lot of situations," Greene said. □

## McNulty claims first Grand Tour stage win, Armirail stays in Giro lead ahead of decisive Dolomites



**Brandon McNulty celebrates as he wins the 15th stage of the Giro D'Italia, tour of Italy cycling race from Seregno to Bergamo, Italy, Sunday, May 21, 2023.**

**Associated Press**

**BERGAMO, Italy (AP)** — American cyclist Brandon McNulty won the 15th stage of the Giro d'Italia on Sunday for his first victory in a Grand Tour while Bruno Armirail kept hold of the leader's pink jersey as the race prepares for a

dramatic and decisive final week.

McNulty, who rides for UAE Team Emirates, edged out Ben Healy and Marco Frigo at the end of the tough 195-kilometer (121-mile) route from Seregno to Bergamo.

"I'm stoked. This was my goal coming here," McNulty said. "I wanted a stage win but I got sick in the time trial."

"I wanted to finish solo but luckily I managed to win even in a sprint ... Let's hope this win adds to the team's motivation on GC with Joao Almeida."

All three had been part of a large breakaway that went early in the stage. Healy attacked on the fourth and final classified climb and McNulty caught up to him on the descent, followed by Frigo with 10 kilometers remaining.

Frigo was dropped again on the unclassified climb shortly before the finish but the Italian's superb descending skills saw him catch back up to the other

two, with the finish line in sight, setting up the final sprint.

Geraint Thomas led a group of general classification riders across the line, almost seven minutes behind McNulty but 33 seconds ahead of Armirail.

That saw Armirail's advantage over Thomas cut to one minute, eight seconds. Primož Roglič was two seconds further back.

"It's been difficult to retain the Maglia Rosa," Armirail said. "It was a hard stage with a lot of climbing and there was Einer Rubio at the front. He was likely to take the jersey so my teammates had to pace all along."

"Yesterday I didn't realize what it was to take the Maglia Rosa but today,

with the incredible support of the crowd, I've found out what it's like. It's huge and I'm delighted to stay in the lead on the rest day."

The race has its second and final rest day on Monday before heading to the Dolomites and a brutal final week.

Three of the last six stages have been given the maximum difficulty rating of five stars and the week kicks off with one of them on Tuesday. There is more than 5,000 meters of elevation along the 203-kilometer (126-mile) route from Sabbio Chiese to Monte Bondone, including a top-category climb to the finish.

The Giro ends in Rome next Sunday. □



## Koepka delivers another major performance to win PGA



Brooks Koepka holds the Wanamaker trophy after winning the PGA Championship golf tournament at Oak Hill Country Club on Sunday, May 21, 2023, in Pittsford, N.Y.

Associated Press

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

**PITTSFORD, N.Y. (AP)** — All those injuries that made Brooks Koepka wonder if he was still among golf's elite were put to rest Sunday at Oak Hill when he beat the strongest field of the year and won the PGA Championship for his fifth major title.

Determined as ever to restore his reputation as the player to beat in the majors, Koepka ran off three quick birdies early, never lost the lead amid a gritty fight from Viktor Hovland and closed with a 3-under 67 for a two-shot victory.

He won his third Wanamaker Trophy — only Jack Nicklaus and Walter Hagen with five and Tiger Woods with four have won the PGA Championship more time — and captured his first major in four years.

And to think the 18 months Koepka was so wounded he felt he couldn't compete, a decision that might have led to him leaving the PGA Tour for Saudi-funded LIV Golf in a shocking move last June after the U.S. Open.

In the Netflix series "Full Swing" that began aired earlier this year, he was quoted as saying his confidence had given way to doubt. "I'm going to be honest with you, I can't compete with these guys week in and week out."

Give him good health and

a clear head, and good luck taking down Koepka in the majors.

He now has won five of his last 22 majors, a rate exceeded only by Woods, Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Nick Faldo and Ben Hogan in the last 75 years.

Koepka is in pretty heady company just about everywhere he looks. His five majors are as many as Seve Ballesteros and Byron Nelson. Among active players, only Woods (15) and Phil Mickelson (6) have more.

"I'm not even sure I dream of it as a kid, that I'd win that many," he said.

Koepka looked as powerful as ever and left little doubt about his place in the game with his two-shot win over hard-luck Hovland (68) and Scottie Scheffler, who closed with a 65 and returned to No. 1 in the world.

"To look back to where we

were two years ago, I'm so happy right now," Koepka said. "This is just the coolest thing."

The victory moves Koepka to No. 13 in the world and No. 2 in the Ryder Cup standings. The top six automatically qualify, and it would be hard to fathom leaving Koepka off the American team. He can only early points in the majors, and two more are still to come.

Koepka had to share the loudest cheers with California club pro Michael Block, who put on an amazing show over four days. Block made a hole-in-one on the 15th hole while playing with Rory McIlroy, and then made two tough par putts at the end for a fourth straight 70.

He tied for 15th, giving him

a return date to the PGA Championship next year at Valhalla. It was the best finish by a club pro since Lonnie Nielsen tied for 11 in 1986 at Inverness.

"The most surreal moment I've ever had in my life," Block said. "I'm living a dream and making sure I'm enjoying the moment. Not getting any better than this — no way in hell."

Block charges \$125 a lesson at Arroyo Trabuco in Mission Viejo, California. He earned just short of \$290,000 at Oak Hill.

For Koepka, his fifth major might have been the sweetest of all considering the scrutiny of his pedestrian play brought on by injuries and his decision to join LIV Golf, where he has won two of the 54-hole events.

□



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### Culinary Voyage

Start your gastronomic journey with a scrumptious appetizer such as the Maryland Crab Cakes, maybe the Crispy Calamari or the mouthwatering creamy Garlic Tarragon Shrimp.

You can also opt for a classic French Onion Soup, a Lobster Bisque or the famously Water's Edge House Wedge, a crisp wedge of fresh romaine lettuce topped with homemade blue cheese dressing, diced tomatoes, chopped bacon, caramelized pecans and blue cheese crumbles, drizzled with balsamic reduction. This followed by the Chef's special of seafood such as Fresh salmon filet seasoned and grilled, topped with lemon cilantro butter and served with homemade mashed potatoes and fresh asparagus, a nice plate of Ahi Tuna or a succulent pasta dish like the Florentina Fettuccine Alfredo. Meat Lovers will have their fix with choices of a devourable 22oz. Bone-In "Tomahawk" Rib-Eye, pan seared in garlic infused oil and finished in the oven or our juicy N.Y Strip Loin, seasoned & grilled. All our steaks options are seasoned with a blend of kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper. Served with homemade mashed potatoes, seasoned vegetables and a choice of red wine reduction, green peppercorn demi glace, mushroom sauce, or bacon blue cheese butter. For extra sides the options are delectable. Fresh asparagus, seasonal vegetables, mashed or baked potatoes, fries or rice and beans. Combine your personal choice with one of the most exclusive wine from the

great selection of international wines to compliment your dish. Kids will enjoy every item of the specially compiled kids menu and there are also optional dishes for all vegans, vegetarians and gluten-free guests. To end the culinary voyage with some luscious sweetness, the desserts are wild. From a piece of coconut flan, NY cheese cake, carrot cake, chocolate brownie or our classic Tiramisu with kahlua and amaretto served with chocolate sauce and coffee jelly. Not to mention the fresh and light piece of key lime pie.

### Creating memories

If you are planning a birthday dinner, here you will receive a nice bottle of champagne to take home with you to extend your experience even further whether on the beach or your own private balcony.

### Live entertainment

Just about every day of the week, there is a different live entertainment by the best local artists for you to enjoy. Whether you're in a romantic mood, or more in a swinging mood, there is absolutely a night especially for you where you can combine great music with delicious cocktails mixed with concoctions. In addition, Water's Edge offers three daily Happy Hours from 12pm-1pm, 4pm-6pm and again from 9pm-10pm with all premium brands specially priced.

### Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Whether you join us for breakfast, lunch or dinner, Water's Edge Restaurant & Bar offers a relaxed and inspirational dining experience overlooking the beautiful Eagle Beach with spectacular ocean views. Gather with friends and family for drinks and appetizers or a night of pampering and relaxation.



### Thank you to all our guests

From the bottom of our hearts, we would like to Thank all of our guests who showed us so much love and support all throughout the year, and hopefully will continue to do so in the years to come. What we are most grateful for is that we could get back to doing what we love, which is looking after our guests. So, thank you for every dinner, lunch, breakfast, every to-go order, every glass of wine, every birthday, anniversary and date-night that you spent with us this last year. To our new guests, Welcome! We hope you to see you back soon! ☐



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To reserve your table please call **+297 583-8000 / ext 8106** or direct line **+297 586-9494**

For more information about the menus, entertainment and hours, please visit the website **watersedge-aruba.com**

